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A LECTURE
ON
THE USE AND ABUSE
OF
Emulation as a Motive to Study :

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

ESSEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS,
AT NEWBURYPORT,
APRIL 9, 1852.

BY ALPHEUS CROSBY.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF THE ASSOCIATION.

LYNN :
BUTTERFIELD & KELLOGG, PRINTERS, OVER THE DEPOT,
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LECTURE.

"Is it right to appeal to EMULATION as a motive to study?" With what earnestness and ability has this question been debated in our country for the last quarter of a century; and yet with how little apparent approach towards a satisfactory decision. There are many and seemingly powerful arguments, on both sides; but unfortunately, as in many other controversies, these arguments, while very convincing to those who employ them, have little influence with the other side, except to suggest counter-arguments claiming equal or even greater authority.

If A., in advocating the use of emulation, urges, as an irresistible argument, that emulation is an essential and universal part of human nature, and therefore CANNOT be a wrong principle of action; his opponent B. instantly replies, that it is, alas, a universal part of man's present nature, but a part which came in at the fall, and therefore MUST be a wrong principle of action; and triumphantly quotes, in confirmation of this view, from the well-known passage in Galatians, in which the apostle classes "emulations" among the "works of the flesh," and solemnly denounces exclusion from "the kingdom of God" upon all them "which do such things." (Gal. v. 20.)

"Not so fast, friend B.," rejoins A., "for the apostle himself appealed to emulation, and even regarded it as one means of salvation. 'If by any means,' he writes in his Epistle to the Romans, 'I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.' (Rom. xi. 14.) And, apropos to this, you remember the express

testimony of the Rev. Mr. Emerson, of Saugus, so distinguished as a pioneer in the cause of high female education, and whose biblical text-books we studied in our childhood. 'Whatever may now be my destiny,' are his remarkable words, 'I have no doubt that, without emulation, I should have been lost—lost to the world, and lost to heaven.' And again: 'Emulation, then, seems like an angel of mercy, sent to snatch me from the dreadful whirl of this Maelstrom of perdition.*'

"Strange," replies B., "that this angel of Mr. Emerson's should so commonly have acted the part of a demon, and should have herself dragged down not only so many mortals into the dread gulf, but even, if common belief be true, a part of the angelic host, whose temper our great poet thus expresses:

'To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell;
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.'

"And what a picture does Cowper draw of its effects in the public schools of England:

'A principle, whose proud pretensions pass
Unquestioned, though the jewel be but glass—
That with the world, not often over-nice,
Ranks as a virtue, and is yet a vice;
Or rather a gross compound, justly tried,
Of envy, hatred, jealousy, and pride—
Contributes most, perhaps, to enhance their fame;
And emulation is its specious name.
Boys, once on fire with that contentious zeal,
Feel all the rage that female rivals feel;
The prize of beauty in a woman's eyes
Not brighter than in theirs, the scholar's prize.
The spirit of that competition burns
With all varieties of ill by turns;
Each vainly magnifies his own success,
Resents his fellow's, wishes it were less,
Exults in his miscarriage, if he fail,
Deems his reward too great, if he prevail,
And labors to surpass him day and night,
Less for improvement than to tickle spite.' "

"Well quoted," A. replies, "and I will not deny that a principle, commonly and largely beneficent, may yet in its

* American Annals of Education, Vol. II., pp. 359, 360.

extreme action be productive of most serious evils. But must we banish fire from our houses, because of the danger of an occasional conflagration? Permit me to thank Cowper for the excellent argument with which he has furnished me too, in the lines immediately following your quotation :

'The spur is powerful, and I grant its force;
It pricks the genius forward in its course;
Allows short time for play, and none for sloth;
And, felt alike by each, advances both.'

"True," says B., "but would you purchase intellectual improvement at the expense of moral degradation? Hear now the rest of the paragraph, for I cannot allow you to use my favorite poet as an authority on your side of the question.

'But judge, where so much evil intervenes,
The end, though plausible, not worth the means.
Weigh, for a moment, classical desert
Against a heart depraved and temper hurt;
Hurt too, perhaps, for life; for early wrong,
Done to the nobler part, affects it long;
And you are staunch, indeed, in learning's cause,
If you can crown a discipline, that draws
Such mischiefs after it, with much applause.'

"Could anything be finer?" closes B., as though now sure of triumph.

"Alas," replies A., "for the consistency of your favorite, if you exclude me from the 'Tirocinium,' you will only drive me to a poem of far higher character, his 'Task.' You cannot have forgotten the eloquent passage in the second book, where he laments, with so much of mingled severity and pathos, over the degenerate condition of the English universities, expressly mentioning, as one feature of their degeneracy, the decline of emulation.

'Then Study languished, Emulation slept,
And Virtue fled. The schools became a scene
Of solemn farce, where Ignorance in stilts,
His cap well lined with logic not his own,
With parrot tongue performed the scholar's part,
Proceeding soon a graduated dunce.'

"And what a terrible picture follows, of the moral degradation which accompanied this decline of study and emula-

tion! Your poet reminds me of the somewhat famous decision of President Dwight upon this subject, in which he says expressly, 'Emulation I condemn. I think it is a wicked passion, and the cause of great evil;' and yet justifies the continuance in our colleges of one of the most objectionable modes of appealing to emulation, consoling himself in conclusion by saying, 'The evils attendant on emulation spring out of causes which we cannot entirely control.*'

These quotations from Dr. Dwight suggest quotations from other doctors of divinity; but it is soon found that great names can be adduced with equal ease on either side of the question, and our disputants despair of deciding it by authority. They then endeavor, by nice analysis, to ascertain the precise nature of the emotion of emulation; but here of course they differ, and, though it is evident that they both practically attach the same meaning to the term, yet each tries so to define it as to secure the victory on his side. Next, they undertake to compare the good and the evil actually resulting from the operation of this principle in our schools and colleges. And here they agree in general about the facts, but differ most widely in their estimate of those facts. What one regards as a great good or great evil, the other esteems quite inconsiderable. What one views as the natural action of the principle, the other considers its abuse. What one represents as effect, the other pronounces to be mere incidental concomitant, or even cause.

So goes the discussion. When is it likely to end? I have not introduced this controversy to your notice with any design of taking a direct part in it. But if you will allow me, I will repeat an apologue, which it has suggested. The scene is laid in Friesland, one of the Low Countries.

The Frieslanders had been for ages in the habit of bruising their corn in mortars, or of grinding it with great labor by hand-mills, when at length some Whitney of his age in-

* Dwight's "Decisions." Also, in *American Annals of Education*, Vol. VI, pp. 111, 112.

vented a very rude kind of wind-mill, which the desire of saving toil soon introduced into quite general use. Still it had very great defects. There was no provision for regulating or stopping its motion; and the sails, or perhaps I should rather call them wind-floats, were permanently turned to the same quarter, whatever might be the direction of the wind. Consequently, whenever the wind blew from this quarter, the mill was in ceaseless and self-consuming action, whether there was grain to grind or not; when the wind blew from the opposite quarter, the motion of the mill was reversed, to its still greater injury; and in all the intermediate directions of the wind, the mill was perforce at rest, however great might be the accumulations of grain for the hopper. The inability to take in sail, also, exposed the mill to serious accident in case of a violent storm. At length, a tornado, which threw down several mills with some loss of life and limb, excited in many of the people a superstitious apprehension of guilt in the use of wind-power for grinding, and led to one of the most remarkable local controversies of that age,—a controversy which raged, with various fortunes, for nearly half a century.

The question was, "Is it right to employ the air as a motive power in grinding?" It was urged, in its favor, that the air is a natural element, diffused over the whole earth, and that therefore, in using it, we are only using one of the great powers of Nature, created for the service of man. But it was objected that, at the fall, the air became the domain of the arch-fiend, and that therefore, in employing its power, we are virtually employing Satanic agency; and the passage was triumphantly quoted, in which the evil one is designated as "the prince of the power of the air,"—that is, wind-power. (Eph. ii. 2.) To this, again, was opposed the passage in which the Psalmist enumerates the wind among the precious stores of the Lord, "He bringeth the wind out of his treasures," (Ps. cxxxv. 7.)—a passage twice repeated, for greater confirmation, by the prophet Jeremiah. (x. 13; li. 16.) Nor could the Frieslanders decide the question by the authority of their poets, philoso-

phers, or priests. The poets now sang the life-giving breath of the zephyr, and now the destructive fury of the whirlwind. The philosophers could not agree even in their very definitions of *air*, *wind*, and *power*. And of the priests, some blessed the wind-mills, and even, according to the custom of the age, baptized them, while others denounced curses upon them. Nor was a comparison of the results of their use at all satisfactory. After long discussion, in which each party claimed the victory, it still remained doubtful, whether the obvious advantages of these mills outweighed their no less obvious inconveniences, costs, and dangers.

Meanwhile, improvements were made in their machinery by quiet men, who took little or no part in the controversy. Means were introduced of controlling and regulating their movements, and of turning their sails so as to catch the wind, from whatever quarter it might blow. The grinding was now done promptly, and at little cost; and the people, finding themselves so well served, by degrees lost all interest in the controversy, although it was never formally decided. And at last the opinion became unanimous, that the fault in the mills had not been at all in the motive power, but solely in the machinery for applying that power.

May it not possibly be the same in regard to the use of emulation as a motive to study; namely, that the fault does not lie at all in the motive power itself, but solely in our machinery for the application of the power; and that, to allay the long agitated controversy, the most direct, if not the only way, is to ascertain, if possible, the defects of our machinery, and then, so far as may be, to remove them? Indeed, it is one of the most remarkable features in the history of opinion, how few controversies have ever been settled in any other than a practical way.

“How, then,” let us ask, “may systems of emulation be defective?”

It is obvious, in the first place, that any system of emulation is defective, just so far as it excludes any from the

hope of success. We often speak of desire as the great spring of action. It is so; but is so only in conjunction with hope. Desire for that which there is hope of attaining, puts itself forth in earnest effort. Desire for that which there is no hope of attaining, stays at home, consuming itself and devouring the spirit with idle longings and torturing regrets. The one climbs the tree, and plucks the fruit; the other, despairing of its ability to reach the wished for prize, yet so fascinated to the spot that it will not go elsewhere and make an effort, lies down in sight of the tree, and pines away there. There is no paralysis that transcends the utter palsy of despair. And despair is the compound of desire and hopelessness. Now many systems of emulation hold up before a body of students a small number of glittering prizes which only a few can hope to obtain. These few may be unduly stimulated to exertion; but upon all the rest, the effect of the prizes, awakening, as they do, desire without hope, is depressing and enfeebling,—both tempting them to study less, and rendering their study less efficient. They may have strength of character enough to resist the temptation, and to study well notwithstanding the repellent influence of the prizes; but in too many cases, they will be disposed, with disappointed Reynard, to cry “sour grapes,” to underrate the value of studies in which they cannot excel, and to turn their energies into paths where effort is not sure defeat.

One of the founders of this association, a distinguished teacher, whose sun went down at noon, but not till he had performed a noble morning's work, has well said: “That system of incentives only can be approved, which reaches and influences successfully *all the mind* subjected to its operation. Nor is this an unimportant consideration. It is not sufficient praise for a teacher that he has a *few* good scholars in his school. Almost any teacher can call out the talent of the active scholars, and make them brilliant reciters. The highest merit, however, lies in reaching *all the pupils*, the dull as well as the active, and in making the most of them,

or rather in leading them to make the most of themselves." While of prize-systems, as commonly administered, he has said with no less propriety: "The remark holds true in general, that prizes stimulate the few, and the many become indifferent not only to prizes, but also to other and better motives."*

In the earliest system of emulation which I can remember, the head-scholar in the spelling class was allowed to keep his place, until he had missed a word. Hence he studied with untiring diligence; and the next one with little less, in order that he might take advantage of any slip in his neighbor, to secure the envied place. But the third having less hope studied less, and the fourth still less: while, below these, the members of the class, having little if any hope of reaching the head, became quite indifferent, and were apt to be content if they just escaped the disgrace of being at the very foot. So that the system, according to the rule of Inverse Proportion, stimulated those most, who required stimulus least; and those least, who required it most. But at length, one of my teachers, understanding the philosophy of the human mind better than his predecessors, introduced an important change. As soon as he had given the head-scholar some testimonial or credit for his place, he sent him to the foot, to work his way up again. We thought this very hard, at first,—that the best scholar should be punished by being sent to the foot. But he studied none the less; and to the most of the class, the change was like a deliverance from the castle of Giant Despair. Each one was now sure of his share of honors, if he could only hold his present place. A gentleman in this city of large experience in teaching, and whom I am happy to see here present, recently

* Page's "Theory and Practice of Teaching," p. 141. The Rev. Mr. Burton, so well and so favorably known as the author of "The District School as it was," in a Lecture before the American Institute of Instruction, August, 1834, remarks of emulation, as commonly appealed to in our colleges: "Nearly if not quite one-half of every class at college, are entirely unreached by this principle, unless it be to stop and stupefy the intellect instead of stimulating it. They reason in this way—If we cannot stand *high*, let us have no standing at all. Let us be known as devoting our time to anything rather than our prescribed books; then our low rank will be imputed not to the lack of talents but of industry," p. 49.

told me that in one of his spelling classes in a winter school, in which he adopted this method, not a single scholar lost his place at the head of the class by missing a word, through the whole winter.

So when prizes are given, they should, if possible, be numerous enough to permit every scholar in school to cherish the hope, if diligent, of obtaining one. And in the common system of college appointments, it is a great defect, that those only who acquire distinction during the earlier years of their course can hope to graduate with high honors. There is much instruction to be derived from the candidly recorded experience of that excellent teacher and zealous anti-emulationist, Mr. Parkhurst, whose memory is worthy of the most grateful remembrance from all his pupils, and to whom I am happy in having this opportunity of expressing my own great obligations.

"I did, indeed," he writes, "enter college with the desire and expectation of getting 'the highest part at Commencement.' But being soon after informed that the highest honors were conferred only on those who had 'borne the burden and heat of the day,' and I having entered two years in advance, my hope of gaining the distinction was at once dashed; and having no relish for any secondary dignity, I dismissed all aspiring thoughts. From that time, instead of striving to outdo my fellows, and confining my mind to the stated exercises of my class, I spent a considerable portion of my time in extra studies, and in miscellaneous reading."*

Again, a system of emulation must be defective, so far as it institutes protracted instead of brief contests. The longer the struggle, and the more distant the prize, the fewer will engage, the more will give out in its progress, and the greater will be the exhaustion of those who persevere. In the four years' contest of a college course, the energies of the first scholar are sometimes so spent, that he accomplishes little in subsequent life. Besides, protracted rivalry,

* American Annals of Education, Vol. II. p. 547.

almost of necessity, engenders bad passions. The apple of discord, if suffered to mature, always ripens into hate.

Again, a system of emulation is defective, so far as it gives prominence or permanence to distinctions of rank. Competition is the most useful, when the results are decisive,—victory or defeat, so that no one is left in uncertainty as to his performance,—but when these results receive no artificial prominence to enhance the glory or deepen the disgrace, and when they do not give rise to permanent distinctions of rank. In a band of associates, to direct one to look down upon others as his inferiors, is to teach him lessons of pride, haughtiness, and perhaps contempt; and on the other hand, to direct one to look up to others as his superiors, is to teach him lessons of envy, dislike, and it may be, malignity;—passions, which are all alike at war with fraternal sympathy, with the peace of society, with the happiness of those against whom they are directed, and still more with the happiness of those who indulge them. It is startling to be hissed at by a viper as you pass by; but what must it be, to have a brood of vipers nestling in your very breast? Students will be quite apt enough to look down, or to look up, without any formal directory of artificially established distinctions. In itself, therefore, it seems undesirable that companions in study should be ranked according to scholarship, as first, second, third, &c.; or that they should be classed as of the first grade, of the second grade, and so on; or that they should receive numbers assigning to them their places upon a scale of scholarship.

“I have known young men,” says Mr. Burton, “who entered college with no other intention than to inform and elevate and strengthen their minds, who soon forgot everything but the paltry honors they must yield to their rivals, if they did not strive for them themselves. The pleasures of study were altogether swallowed up in hopes and fears about recitation and rank. And they were heartily rejoiced when the collegiate course was terminated, not because they had been educated and prepared for high usefulness, but

because the torture of rivalry was done, and they were freed from anxiety and miserable suspense, concerning their final standing and closing honors."*

Yet further, it may be remarked as an imperfection in any system of education, when the motives which it presents are quite different from those which have place in ordinary life. Hence, there is much force in the remark of a gentleman, of whom I cannot speak as I might wish, since I see him here present: "If you were to expel all emulation from a school, and attempt to reduce to one dead level every mind, I question whether you would not make it so different from the world in which your pupils must act, that it would hardly be a place of salutary discipline; and perhaps the best thing about your plan would be, that such is the force of nature, that it would be impossible for you perfectly to succeed."†

An important truth is here suggested, which has been often lost sight of in education; namely, that in a course of preparatory discipline, a habit should be formed of strenuous exertion under the influence of such motives as will continue to bear in subsequent life. Habits of exertion so formed will be likely to be permanent; but if the motives are of an artificial and transient character, there is great reason to fear that the exertion excited by them, however energetic for a time, will be equally transient. Hence, the cases have been sadly frequent, of students who have acquired great distinction under a system of unnatural forcing, but have afterwards sunk down into ordinary or less than ordinary men. They were mere hot-house plants, that could not thrive when left to the common sun and common rains of out-door life. While, then, we should be opposing nature by an attempt to exclude emulation from our schools and colleges, we must be careful to introduce it only in natural and healthy forms, and such as are akin to the influences of

* Lecture before the American Institute of Instruction, August, 1834, p. 48.

† Rev. Dr. Withington's Lecture on Emulation, before the American Institute of Instruction, August, 1833, p. 149.

the great world without. The atmosphere of the school-room must not be devoid of oxygen; neither must it be all oxygen. How then shall the teacher secure the proper mixture? Not by going to his laboratory, and through artificial processes developing the several elements in what he conceives to be their right proportion; but by throwing doors and windows wide open, and letting in the free air of heaven, exquisitely compounded and perfumed and freshened by a divine chemistry, which no art of man can imitate.

Once more, a system of emulation is obviously defective, so far as the results are made to depend upon the judgment of the teacher. A revered teacher, who was to me as a father during several years of my youth, was in the habit, whenever I asked him respecting the comparative merit of different persons, of simply replying, "Comparisons are odious." They are especially odious, when they intrude into the sacred and endearing relations of life. We have no feeling of delicacy in comparing strangers. But what parent, that has the heart of a parent, is willing to pronounce one of his children superior to another? What true-hearted man will consent to sit in open judgment upon his intimate friends, and to declare that he esteems one of them above another? Will the delicate plants of affection thrive in the cold air of such judgments? But the teacher sustains to his pupils the mingled relations of parent and friend. No third relation inconsistent with these should be added, and he should do nothing to mar the sacred confidence and full openness of heart belonging to these relations. Let others grade his scholars, if they will; let his scholars establish natural distinctions among themselves; but to him let them all be alike, all equally his children, all equally his friends, all equally prized and beloved,—except, of course, in those inner chambers of the heart, which are not exposed to human eye, and where unavoidable preferences may safely be indulged.

Besides, the opinions of a teacher respecting the comparative merits of his pupils cannot always be just; and when

just, are liable to be suspected of injustice. Even if he attempts to secure the strictest justice by marking the merit of each scholar at each recitation, he is liable to inaccuracy from the fact that he is marking one scholar while intent upon the recitation of the next; unless, indeed, he is willing to sacrifice to the exactness of his record some portion of the interest and profit of the recitation, and to become less a *teacher*, that he may be more an *examiner*.

Such have seemed to me to be the prime defects which it is important to avoid in constructing a system of emulation. Can these defects be avoided? Or must we either take emulation with these defects, or else, on account of them, reject all appeal to it, and endeavor to secure what study we can without the aid of this natural and most powerful stimulant? In attempting to answer this question, since it is so much easier to describe machinery with a model before us, permit me to introduce what purports to be a letter addressed to me by a friend engaged in teaching, but which I cannot claim to have received through the post office.

Before reading it, however, one caution may be proper; namely, that the teacher, who may think it proper to appeal to emulation, should never rely upon it as the right arm of his strength; that he should admit it only to a secondary and quite subordinate place in his list of incentives; and that he should spare no effort to keep most constantly and most prominently before the minds of his pupils those higher motives, which partake less of earth and more of heaven, and which, while they impel to exertion, elevate and expand the intellect, ennoble and purify the heart. If for the full performance of his duty, he thinks it incumbent upon him to "tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs," he must never "pass over the weightier matters of judgment and the love of God." With this preliminary caution, which could not be enforced as it deserves, if even the whole time of our session were devoted to this single object, let us proceed to the letter.

Woodland, March 24, 1852.

FRIEND C.,

You request me to write you the history and details of a new system of recitation introduced into my school, and the advantages which seem to me to have resulted from its introduction. I am happy to comply with your request; and should my letter prove a long one, you must remember that you urged me to write with all the minuteness which my time would allow. You asked for "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over;" and you will not now, I trust, like many a vehement petitioner, start back in dismay at finding your prayer too literally granted.

You had some acquaintance, I think, with G., my predecessor in the school. He was not only a good scholar, but a sincerely good man. Nor is this enough to say of him. He was truly remarkable for purity, firmness, and consistency of character. He was one of those men, of whom you have heard Professor S. speak, who "would burn at the stake without tying." Unfortunately, he entered college with a spirit of uncompromising hostility to emulation in every form, and feeling that his especial mission there, next to being himself as good a scholar as he could, was to attempt the overthrow of the appointment system. And manfully did he battle with it through the whole four years. He discussed the subject in private conversation and in public declamation, in class compositions and in society debates, in long walks, in small gatherings, and in meetings convoked for the express purpose. Being so earnest and able, he succeeded in rallying quite a party of adherents, and in procuring their signatures to three long memorials which he prepared and presented, two to the College Faculty, and one to the Trustees, for the abolition of the system of appointments. I shall never forget when Professor S., in one of our recitations on intellectual philosophy, requested him to define *monomania*; and afterwards, roguishly, as I think, though with the gravest tone, asked him to give an illustration. The irrepressible laugh, which arose from every part of the class, showed that the illustration had already been given. But what should G. do, as our Commencement drew near? He first requested the Faculty to omit his name in the list of appointments. They replied, that they were not at liberty to do such wrong to his excellent scholarship; and gave him what was regarded as the third honor, the Philosophical Oration. True to his principles, he refused to accept it. By this refusal he forfeited his degree, which was, however, conferred upon him by the Trustees, on the day after Commencement, as of special favor, *ex speciali gratia*, as the Latin form runs.

Coming direct from this martyrdom to the school at Woodland, it is not wonderful that he came with the full purpose to reduce his theory to practice, thoroughly to purge out the old and hated leaven of emulation, and to show in unspotted brightness the "more excellent way." All prizes for scholarship were discarded; the daily record of proficiency which had been introduced and made very efficient by his predecessor, was discontinued; there must be no spelling schools; and even the classes in spelling must

all be headless. Still his school for the first year was certainly a model school. The old stimulants which his predecessors had vigorously applied, had not yet spent their force ; and, aided by these, the new and higher motives to which he himself appealed with a lofty and contagious enthusiasm,—being in truth not so much substitutes for the former motives as additions to them,—worked wonders at first almost like those of Eastern romance. “What application! What scholarship! What good order! And all from such ennobling motives!” The school and nearly the whole community became converts to the doctrine of *no emulation*. And when their excellent minister expressed his doubts of the soundness of the new doctrine and spoke in defence of the former system, this was regarded by some as an evidence of his want of piety ; it began even to be whispered about, that religion would never prosper with such an Achan in the camp, and had the tide risen a little higher, he would have been forced to ask a dismission.

But during the second year, the enthusiasm of both teacher and scholars began somewhat to flag. The appeals which at first were stirring as the sound of a trumpet, had now become familiar and almost trite. They were uttered with less spirit, and were received with less attention. Some of the scholars were even heard to say, “What is the use of all these long sermons about duty, and character, and usefulness, and gratitude, and affection? Don’t we know all that, and don’t we mean to study as well as we can? But how can we be expected to study any better, when it is all one long hard pull of duty, without anything to enliven it, or anything to be got by it?” Language as broad as this, however, was still rare. But the distinction between two classes in the school was now becoming quite marked. One class were pursuing their studies calmly, and sometimes a little sluggishly, but quite regularly and very usefully, under the combined influence of principle, good feeling, habit, and that natural emulation which no system can wholly exclude. The other class, by no means inferior in native talent to the first, were suffering, some consciously and others unconsciously, from the lack of stronger and more immediate incentives to study. Nor were these by any means all alike. Some gave themselves up unthinkingly to indolence, sport, or light reading ; but the most made some sincere efforts to resist the languor which was gradually stealing over them. From time to time they would rouse themselves, study diligently for a while, and make excellent resolutions, soon, alas, to be broken. The school, with all the ability of its teacher and all the good purposes of the pupils, reminded one of the crowded church or lecture-room, where the air has lost so much of its oxygen, that many a suffering hearer, while striving with all his might to catch every word, and positively torturing himself to keep his eyes open and his head erect, yet, to his own mortification and the derision of his neighbors, falls fast asleep.

During the third year, the decline of the school was still more manifest. But there is no need that I should trace its downward progress step by step. At the close of this year, G. left the school, unshaken in his theories of education, and believing that the signal success of his first year was

owing to the excellence of his system, while the partial failure of the other two years was to be ascribed to causes beyond his control. He resigned the school to me with an earnest exhortation that I would maintain his system in its integrity; and I found the community at Woodland so thoroughly imbued with his views, that any immediate return to the system which had previously prevailed seemed quite impracticable, even if I had myself wished it. But my own repugnance to the old system was hardly less strong than that of my friend G., though upon quite different grounds. So I began the school upon G.'s system.

For a time, a new face, a new voice, a new method of saying or doing familiar things, produced some quickening effect. But any effect which is founded upon novelty, soon wears away. And as I had less faith in the system than G., less energy of character, and far less power of personal influence, I soon foresaw, that, unless some new force could be applied, the school would not be long in sinking to a lower grade of scholarship than the lowest to which it had fallen under my predecessor. What could I do? This question filled the thoughts of many an anxious hour. I consulted the minister. "Return," said he, "if the people will permit it, to the old system of emulation." I consulted the people. Some referred the matter to my judgment; but others said that on no account whatever were they willing that their children should be again subjected to so wicked, unjust, and demoralizing a system. The question came back unanswered, "What could I do?"

The condition of one class especially troubled me. It was my third class in reading and spelling, and consisted of eight bright and tolerably studious girls, and of twelve no less bright but quite inattentive boys. Two of the idlest, whose names were James and Henry, had superior intellects, which were lying almost undeveloped, except as they were developed by play and the reading of light stories. I longed to find some genial influence which should have power to open such promising buds into bloom and fragrance. One afternoon I was standing at the window near my desk, and watching them as they were playing ball with others of their class before the school-house. "What a scene of life, activity, and happiness! What keen eyes in following the ball! What dexterous hands in throwing, knocking, and catching it! What nimble feet in running from goal to goal! What intent and sagacious minds in watching and taking advantage of every turn in the game! And what faces radiant of pleasure earned by intense exertion! Can these be the same boys that go so dully, and carelessly, and limpingly through their lessons? The bodies certainly are the same; but to each body there must be two distinct souls, one which animates it on the play-ground, and another which dwells within it, I will not say animates it, in the school-room. O that I could devise some way of bringing the play-ground soul into the school-room, and of dismissing the school-room soul from all further service!"

Such were my feelings as I gazed; and the subject not only haunted my mind through the whole evening, but kept me wakeful for a time upon the pillow. At length I fell into a disturbed sleep; and now the objects which

had occupied my waking thoughts, presented themselves in the masquerade of a dream. I dreamed that I had finished my school, and that after some months spent elsewhere I was returning on horseback alone by the familiar scene of my labors. I saw a few boys there listlessly playing with balls, but without any apparent game. One was throwing his ball into the air, and catching it as it came down; another was throwing his upon the earth, and catching it after the rebound. Two were tossing a ball backward and forward to each other; and two or three were knocking their balls hither and thither without any seeming aim; while yet others were carelessly looking on. "These stupid or sluggish boys," I said to myself, "cannot be any of my old scholars. They never played ball in this fashion." But as I drew near, I found that they were no other than the boys of my third class, whose feats at ball-playing I had so often admired; and there were James and Henry, their old leaders, lying at length upon the grass. As soon as these two boys saw me, they sprang up and came running to meet me.

After the first interchange of greetings and questions, "What can this mean, boys?" I exclaimed, "such spiritless ball-playing, and you taking no part! This does not seem at all like old times." "Ah, no!" they replied, "our old teacher Mr. G. has come back again, a very good man, you know, whom we all love very much, but very queer." "But what has that to do with your ball-playing?" I asked. "We will tell you. You know, perhaps, some of the odd notions he used to have about emulation. Well, he came back more set in them than ever. So one day he gave us a long talk upon the subject, and told us what bad things many great and good men had said about emulation; that Plato called it 'the daughter of envy;' that St. Paul classed it with hatred, variance, wrath, strife, envyings, and murders; that President Dwight said that it was 'a wicked passion, and the cause of great evil;' and that many others had spoken no better of it. 'Now, boys,' said he, 'if emulation is so wicked, it is just as wicked in your play, as in your study; and it would be wrong in me to allow anything wicked about the school. So that hereafter in your plays you must have nothing of that wicked principle of emulation. One boy must not try to out-run another; for that would be emulation, and would be wicked. Two boys must not wrestle together, for that would be a strife which would throw the other. Two boys must not try which can fly his kite the highest, for that might make the one vain, and the other envious. In playing ball, you must never have any sides, or any *ins* and *outs*, for that would at once give rise to competition.' And so he went through all our plays, and spoiled them all. We asked him if there was nothing we might play. 'Oh yes,' said he; 'you misunderstand me. I wish you to engage in all these plays; and it is your duty to do so, for this is necessary for the proper growth and development of your physical powers. I simply wish that you should banish from them that hateful and malignant spirit of emulation. Let each boy see how fast he can run, without reference to any other boy. Let each boy fly his own kite as high as he can, without ever looking at any other boy's kite. Instead of trying to throw another boy, see into how many postures you can throw your own body, without throwing

it down. And in ball-playing, see how high or how far you can knock your own ball, or how many times you can catch it, just as if there were no other boys and no other balls in existence. In a word, always set before yourselves an absolute, and never a relative standard. Then your sport will work out its proper end of physical cultivation, without involving, as at present, sacrifice of virtue and degradation of moral character. Acting under the influence of steady principle, you will become better players. And the play-ground will become the scene, not as now, of variance, and strife, and pride, and envy, and jealousy, and hatred, and malignity, and consequent misery; but of peace, and order, and love, and good fellowship, and, as a consequent, true happiness. If, boys,' he said, in conclusion, 'you will but faithfully make a month's trial of the new system, you will not need another word said in its favor.' And so," proceeded the boys, "we have been going on ever since. But we find play in this way to be very hard and dull work. We are not as good players in anything as we used to be. We cannot play more than half as long without getting tired; and, what is still worse, we are twice as often out of temper. We have as many quarrels on the play-ground now in a week, as we used to have in a month. O that we could have one genuine game of ball, such as we used to have when you were our teacher!" "Poor boys!" I exclaimed with such intenseness of sympathy, that I awoke, and found to my great relief, that this new and improved system of playing upon the no-emulation principle was a mere dream.

But now the question flashed with great force into my mind,—“How can you expect the young to love study, if you remove from it all those social stimuli, without which even play loses its zest, and becomes hard, dull work?” A new direction was now given to my thoughts; and during the rest of the week, my mind was occupied, when not otherwise engrossed, in analyzing the favorite games of my scholars, and endeavoring to ascertain what were those elements of attractiveness and power, which rendered them so pleasing, and so efficient not only in the development of the bodily energies, but also in the formation of the intellectual and moral character. For I now saw clearly that the real charms and forces of these games did not at all lie in any mere outward apparatus, as of bats, and balls, and goals, but in something far deeper, more vital, and more rational. I was especially impressed with the following particulars.

1. The great extent to which the interest of these games depends upon the principle of emulation; and the small extent to which this principle here produces the evils ascribed to it in study.

2. That in most of these games, the competition is not individual, but associated; in other words, the question is not in respect to the success of one individual in comparison with others, but in respect to the success of one party, or side, in comparison with another. In this associated competition, each one is stimulated to do his best, by the consciousness that the fortunes of others as well as his own depend upon his exertions—that the State hangs upon his arm—and that both friends and foes are watching his every act. His toils are lightened, cheered, and animated, by sympathy. In

success, he cannot indulge in the mean vanity of a selfish triumph ; and in defeat, he is sustained by the companionship of fellow-sufferers : while, for the most part, success and defeat are pretty equally distributed. Thus, while he co-operates with some and contends with others, the centripetal and centrifugal forces of his nature are admirably balanced ; and the planet moves rapidly and joyously in its proper orbit. It hardly need be added, that the natural competitions of life partake very largely of this social character.

3. In most of these sports, the competition is keen but brief ; tasking alone's energy for a short time, but soon decided, and soon after forgotten. This is no unimportant feature ; long struggles for a distant object are apt to call forth the exertions of but few, and to exhaust those few. A dozen boys will all do their best in a race of a few rods ; but set before them a race of as many miles, and how many will engage in it ? Of those who start, how many will persevere ? And if any reach the goal, how long will it be before they will recover from their intense fatigue ?

4. These games have usually plain criteria of success and defeat ; so that there is no need of judges, and nothing depending on the estimate of third parties. No one can complain, that he is deprived of his just due by the partiality of an umpire.

5. The division into rival parties is constantly varying. The opponent of to-day was an associate yesterday, and will be an associate again to-morrow. Thus the antipathies which arise in the long struggles of fixed parties, are avoided.

6. There are changes in the relations which an individual holds to the game, and in the offices which he performs. He is now *out*, and now *in* ; now testing the powers of another, and now submitting his own powers to the test ; now guarding against a failure on his own part, and now taking advantage of the failure of another.

On comparing these features with those of our common systems of emulation in study, I was struck with the remarkable contrast ; and it seemed to me that I here found a satisfactory explanation of the great evils which have undeniably attended these systems. According to these systems, the competition is not associated, but individual. Each scholar contends with all the rest ; he is an Ishmael, whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him. The system provides no attractive forces to counteract the repellent, and thus maintain that balance which is essential to mental and moral health. One only of all the aspirants can be completely successful ; while to most, the result is deep-felt disappointment. The struggle, too, is a long one ; extending through a whole term or a whole year, or sometimes even through four years. Some will not enter the race for so distant a prize ; others commence, but are wearied by the length of the way ; while those who come off victors sometimes reach the goal in a state of utter exhaustion, and having contracted maladies of body or mind or heart, which will cleave to them their lives through. Nor are the results independent of the arbitrary judgments of others. They often wound by real injustice ; and still oftener by suspicion of partiality.

where none was felt. And in such cases, the most common object of resentment or suspicion is the teacher, who ought to have upon the minds and hearts of his pupils the firm hold of the most entire esteem and confidence. Nor is the long competition often enlivened by the agreeable and useful variety of alternately testing the attainments of another, and submitting our own attainments to the test. It is for the most part a monotonous questioning on the part of the teacher, and answering on the part of the scholar.

Must a contrast like this, I asked myself, always continue? Or is it possible to introduce into the school-room principles and methods akin to those which give such life, energy, healthfulness, and pleasure to the playground? I resolved to make the experiment.

Accordingly the next Monday, when my third class came up to read, I said to them, "I observe, boys, that you commonly choose sides in playing ball." "Oh yes, sir," said James, his bright eyes sparkling, "we could not play well without." "And would you like to choose sides in reading and spelling?" "We never tried it, sir," said Henry, "but I think we should very much." "Well, then, who shall choose?" "Let James and Henry," said another boy, "they choose for us the oftenest." "No," said James and Henry, "we may be good ball-players, but we are very poor scholars. Let Jane and Lucy choose; they are the best scholars in the class." But Jane and Lucy said that this was a business which the boys understood better than they did. So by general consent, James and Henry were appointed leaders of the two sides. And in choosing their associates, though idle scholars themselves, they showed an excellent appreciation of the scholarship of others. Next came the arrangement of the class upon the floor. They had before stood upon a single straight line. In place of this, I drew upon the floor, two lines meeting with an obtuse angle, so that the two sides should have a better view of each other. Upon each of these lines I arranged one of the sides, beginning at the angle with the girls in alphabetical order, and after these placing the boys in the same order, except the leader, who stood at the end of the line. From the relative position of these lines, I called one of the sides the East side or half, of the class, and the other the West side or half.

I then appointed a reading and a spelling lesson for the afternoon; charging the class, and especially the leaders, to see with great care which division would make the fewest mistakes, and which would be the most attentive in correcting the mistakes of the other division. A mistake in reading was to count one, and in spelling two, against a division; and the correction of a mistake of the opposite side was to count the same in its favor. The mode of correction was to be the following. If one of the East side made a mistake, all those of the West side who saw it, were to raise their hands; and then the leader of this side was to name some one to correct it. If, however, he should fail, then those of the East side who thought they could correct the mistake were to raise their hands; and so on until the point should be set right: each side being charged for all the mistakes it should make in the process, and receiving credit for any correction of another's mistake. In one particular we afterwards introduced

variety. When members of a division raised their hands for the correction of a mistake,—during one week the rule would be that the corrector of the mistake should be named by the leader of that division, who would commonly select one of the better scholars ; but during another week by the leader of the opposite division, who would rather select one of the poorer scholars. And thus the privilege of correcting mistakes was distributed with more equality. Each scholar of the class was also directed, in studying the spelling lesson, to select the hardest words he could, to give out to the opposite side ; because every one that spelled a word correctly would have the privilege of giving out the next word for one of the opposite side to spell. One of each side was appointed by the leader to keep an account of the charges and credits, which I was also to keep myself in order to prevent dispute ; and the victory was to belong to that side which should have the balance at the close of the week most in its favor.

The system so resembled that to which they were accustomed upon the play-ground, that the class fell into it with great ease and readiness, and observed and enforced its rules with great exactness. They entered upon the work with much zeal, but with no less of mutual good feeling. The week was to them one of unprecedented diligence and improvement ; they were themselves animated and delighted by the consciousness of this ; and I was cheered by the hope that a new era in study was opening both for them and for the whole school. Before the end of the week, every reading and spelling class in the school had made a request to me to be put upon the same system. I promised to accede to their wishes the next week, if the results of this week's experiment should prove favorable. The two divisions came out at the close of the week very nearly equal. Henry's division was charged 21 for mistakes, and credited 17 for corrections ; balance against the division, 4. James' division was charged 22 for mistakes, and credited 16 for corrections ; balance against the division, 6. Henry's division, therefore, came out best by two. James wished to renew the contest the next week, without changing the divisions. But I resolved to avoid the bad effects which might result from a protracted competition between the same parties ; and accordingly told him that he must wait for his turn as leader to come round again, and that the next week there must be new divisions under new leaders. On the Monday following, the class chose Jane and Lucy as leaders ; who proceeded afterwards as before, to elect the members of their respective sides. This week James and Henry were on the same side, and forgot the competition of the last week in the co-operation of this. In compliance with the earnest requests which had been made, the system was this week extended to all the classes in reading and spelling, with no less favorable results.

A new air of studiousness and consequent good order was now visible throughout the school. Nor was the effect confined to the school-room. The ordinary sports upon the play-ground went on,—I should have greatly regretted their cessation,—yet little knots might often be seen in the grove behind the school-house, reading and spelling to each other ; and some mothers playfully complained to me that their children were so anxious to

become perfect in their reading and spelling, that they were themselves obliged to turn school-mistresses, and hear them rehearse their lessons, sometimes over and over, at home.

In making this change, I apprehended some opposition from the zealous anti-emulationists of Woodland, whom our friend G. had been so carefully indoctrinating for three years. But some of them did not appear to perceive that the new method involved the principle to which they had been so much opposed; and others told me expressly, that to emulation in this form they had no objection. Indeed, I think that our friend would have been not a little chagrined, if he had seen with what expectancy some of his most decided converts watched the results of the weekly competitions, and what a new interest they were now taking in the school and in the progress of their children.

After a month's careful trial of the system in reading and spelling, I introduced it into my classes in Colburn's Arithmetic, and gradually into all my regular classes. I was induced the rather to make it universal, because I found that those studies in which it had not been introduced were suffering in comparison with the rest. In some of these studies, I permitted my scholars to frame new questions for each other, involving the same principles with those in the book. In some studies, an answer might be correct as far as it went, but not complete. In such cases, I permitted one of the opposite division to complete the answer, and gave him credit for it, but without charging the other scholar with an error. I was gratified to find that the intellectual stimulus of the system rendered it even more valuable in studies requiring thought, than in those that were merely mechanical. You will not, of course, wish me to specify all the varieties of our method in the different studies, and our provisions in case of the absence of a scholar, or of other contingencies that may arise; or to describe minutely my record of charges and credits, which are first put against the name of each scholar, and then summed up for general results. This record is very simple and easily kept, and shows not only the general results of each week's competition, but also how many wrong answers each scholar gives, and how many answers of others he corrects or completes, in each study which he pursues.

Our system has now lost its novelty; but, like the oxygen in the air which we breathe, it has not therefore lost its enlivening and invigorating effect. It has now been in operation more than a year and a half. Having become a familiar part of our every-day life, it shows little of the excitement with which it commenced; but it is not therefore the less, but rather the more efficient. Emotions have subsided into settled practical habits.

You ask me in respect to the advantages which I attribute to the system. If this question has not been already sufficiently answered, they are briefly these.

1. The associated competition which characterizes it, furnishes a more healthful and efficient stimulant than the merely individual competition of other systems; while it is quite free from the great evils which accompany the

ordinary modes of appealing to emulation. At the same time, the scholar is by no means indifferent to his individual reputation, of which he has a quite accurate measure in the weekly choosing of sides. There are occasional exceptions arising from personal preferences, but in general, the better a scholar recites one week, the earlier he knows he shall be chosen the next; and the reverse. At the same time, the order of choice is not made prominent by the place in the class; and, if the leaders wish it, they are allowed to make their selections privately.

2. The two divisions of a class, while they cannot give rise to permanent cliques, form for the week, societies of mutual aid, watch, stimulus, and encouragement. Often the leader of a division, or the best scholar in it, acts during the week as a species of private tutor to his division, with great advantage to them and still more to himself. Divisions have sometimes been allowed to use unoccupied recitation rooms for such rehearsals. That the honors and advantages of being leader may be the more distributed, a leader cannot be candidate for re-election, till after an interval, varying according to the size of the class, but averaging about a month. The leaders for the week are commonly elected by the class on Monday; two names being handed in on one ballot, and a plurality of votes electing.

3. The publicity of the whole system enables parents to know with great precision both the relative and the absolute scholarship of their children, without the necessity of those formal reports of proficiency from the teacher, which, if honestly made, are so apt to be annoying to both teacher, pupil, and parent, and if dishonestly made, are so pernicious or wrongful to the three.

4. As the questions at recitation are chiefly proposed by the scholars themselves, the teacher is less fatigued in body and mind, and is in a much better condition to give the needful explanations and illustrations, either in the course of the mutual examination or at the close of it. There are few recitations in which I do not ask some questions myself; but as these, to a great extent, are not designed as an examination upon the book, but to lead the mind beyond it, the results are never marked. Hence the scholars welcome these questions, and express their opinions in reply to them with great freedom.

5. Perhaps the greatest advantage of the system is the double exercise of the scholar's mind in study and recitation. In most schools, his work at recitation is that of a mere respondent, and it is for this only that he prepares himself. But it is usually a higher exercise of the mind to examine another upon a subject, than to sustain an examination one's self; and it may show far more thought and learning, to frame questions readily and skilfully, than to answer them correctly. Every teacher has remarked, how different his manner of studying to hear a recitation is from his former manner of studying to recite himself. Yet each manner has its advantages, and these are combined in our present system. The scholar studies each lesson as one who is alternately to be questioned and to question; and to question, too, without the book. He is, therefore, intent to search out the most difficult questions which the lesson will furnish, both that he may propose them to

others if he should have opportunity, and that he may answer them correctly if proposed to himself. In hearing a lesson which has deep places, I have often been surprised to observe with what patience and ingenuity these have all been probed. I do not, however, uniformly require that all the questions should be put from memory. After the questions have gone through the class once or twice in this way, I sometimes permit the leaders to stand before the class with open books, and alternately to put questions to the opposite sides. I require, of course, that the questions should be clearly stated, and that they should properly belong to the lesson; but, as my scholars gain experience in their work, I find the necessity of interference becoming less and less frequent. How much such a system of mutual questioning and correction must contribute to prepare scholars for becoming teachers, is too obvious to require remark. The school into which it is introduced, becomes of necessity a Normal School, with its pupils already engaged in daily practical teaching. Nor, as it seems to me, is there any profession or sphere in life, to which such a discipline would not form a useful preparative.

In answering your questions, I have endeavored to avoid all exaggeration, and to set down the truth simply as it is. Still, I am aware that every one is liable to be prepossessed in favor of his own; and I hope, that instead of accepting my statement, you will come and see for yourself. Or if you cannot do this, can you not procure that some experiments akin to mine should be made in your own neighborhood, by some teacher who will have good judgment in adapting the details to the character of his school, and the age of his pupils?

I am aware that some object to all trial of new methods; as though it were sure that all the best methods were found out and adopted long ago, and as though any deviation from common usage must be either a folly or a crime. But while other sciences are advancing so rapidly by the aid of experiment, can we regard it as certain that the great science of Education, one of the broadest and deepest of all the sciences, has already attained absolute perfection, and that, too, while even its claims to be called a science are as yet acknowledged by so few? And if not already perfect, how is it possible it should make any progress toward perfection, if all experiment be here forbidden? Nay, why this hostility to experiment? Is not the education of every child, of necessity, an experiment? What, indeed, is every successive step in every one's life, but a new experiment?

Yours, very truly,

J. W. H.

I thank you for your kindness in permitting me to read to you so long a letter; and will only say in conclusion, that while I make no warranty of its facts, I am willing to accept the opinions which it expresses as my own. If true, may they prevail; if false, may they be touched, as with Ithuriel's spear;

"For no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness."

POSTSCRIPT.

THE analogy of the method suggested in the preceding lecture to that of the old-fashioned spelling schools, which used to be so common, especially in our country towns, has doubtless occurred already to most who have been familiar with such schools. And to all these I confidently appeal, whether they have ever known any mode of awakening emulation in study more effectual in reaching all and stimulating them to high effort, or more exempt from the evils usually ascribed to this principle. Of one period of my early school-boy days, there is nothing which I remember with so much freshness and particularity, as the zeal with which I studied through Webster's Spelling Book and Perry's Dictionary, in search of the hardest words I could find to propose at a spelling school, and in order to be prepared for the hard words which might be proposed to me. I still remember, after the lapse of more than a third of a century, the very words which I selected for the occasion. A highly esteemed clergyman of the city in which the preceding lecture was delivered, himself a native of the city, told me after its delivery, that there was scarcely anything in the school-system of his boyhood, which awoke a strong interest, except the spelling schools.

In the free discussion which, according to a wise custom of the Association, followed the lecture, a gentleman of high rank as a scholar and teacher, asked me if I regarded the system proposed in the lecture as equally well adapted to higher institutions of learning, and to more advanced studies. I answered, that I saw no reason why it should not be; although, of course, in different institutions, and in different studies, the details would require some modification. Indeed, that it seemed to me, that, in the higher studies requiring independent thought, the intellectual excitement arising from the system of mutual questioning must be even far more valuable than in the mere elementary and mechanical studies. I was not then aware, that such a system has been for some time regularly pursued in one of our highest professional Seminaries, the State and National Law School, at Ballston Spa, N. Y. The following is extracted from a recent Circular of the School.

"We make the student his own teacher, by throwing him completely upon his own exertions and resources. An impression or idea that is self-acquired, rests upon the mind with infinitely greater vividness and permanency than one that is passively received by the communication of another. . . . Thus in our recitations, the students are required to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with their whole lesson, and then to commit to memory all the principles and ideas contained in a certain portion, say one page of it. Leaving their books behind them, they are divided into two equal divisions, and seated at opposite sides of the room. Beginning with the first page in the lesson, the one who has committed it, puts to the opposite

side, in the form of questions, all it contains, anxious to glean from it every idea, and to give to his antagonists as many and difficult interrogatories as possible, while the pride of the latter impels them to come prepared to answer. The second page is then similarly put by the first one on the other side; and this process of alternation goes on till the entire lesson is exhausted, while the Professor sits between to settle disputes, and to illustrate and enlarge upon the text after the students have exerted themselves to the utmost.

“ This plan tends greatly to strengthen the memory,—a most important faculty to an advocate at the bar,—to make them familiar with putting questions adroitly in their own language, and keeps up among them a constant scene of mental contest and collision, under the excitement of which, it is wonderful to observe, with what a vivid and permanent grasp the principles and precepts of law seize upon the minds of the pupils. . . . This feature pervades every department and exercise of the school, and distinguishes the system from that of all similar institutions in the country. . . . It is thus that we make the student, under the supervision of a competent instructor, his own teacher, instead of a passive recipient of knowledge. And the rapidity of his advance, and the thoroughness, systematic order, and permanency of his acquirements under this system, are truly remarkable.”—*Circular*, 1852, pp. 9, 10.

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